

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-8 (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) Process of forming a nonwoven material comprising

- producing thermoplastic polymer filaments;
- laying the filaments upon a moving support to provide at least one layer with a machine direction tensile strength of less than about 5 N per 5 cm at a basis weight of 50 gsm;
- passing the at least one layer through a compacting calender having a surface temperature and nip pressure such that said temperature and said nip pressure do not cause the filaments to exceed a melting point of the filaments;
- winding the at least one layer at a tension of less than about 40 N/m; and
- unwinding the at least one layer and subjecting said at least one layer to hydroentanglement to provide a nonwoven material;

wherein said at least one layer is provided and subjected to said winding in absence of prebonding of the filaments.

10. (Currently Amended) Process of forming a nonwoven material comprising

- producing thermoplastic polymer filaments;
- laying the filaments upon a moving support to provide at least one layer with a machine direction tensile strength of less than about 5 N per 5 cm at a basis weight of 50 gsm;
- passing the at least one layer through a compacting calender having a surface temperature of less than about 130°C at a calender nip pressure of about 30 N/mm;
- winding the at least one layer at a tension of less than about 40 N/m; and
- unwinding the at least one layer and subjecting said at least one layer to hydroentanglement to provide a nonwoven material;

wherein said at least one layer is provided and subjected to said winding in absence of prebonding of the filaments.

11. (Original) Process according to claim 9 or 10 wherein said filaments are produced from a polyolefin.

12. (Original) Process according to claim 11 wherein said polyolefin is polypropylene.

13. (Original) Process according to claim 9 or 10 wherein said filaments are produced from a polyester.

14. (Original) Process according to claim 9 or 10 wherein the surface temperature of said calender is less than about 120°C.

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15. (Original) A process according to claim 9 or 10 further comprising including an additive in said producing of the filaments.

16. (Original) A process according to claim 9 or 10 further comprising incorporating an additive in said at least one layer.

17. (Original) Process according to claim 9 or 10 wherein said hydroentanglement is carried out utilizing a plurality of water jets with varying pressures.

Claims 18-25 (Canceled).